



INSTRUCT-O-GRAM

THE HANDS-ON TRAINING GUIDE FOR THE FIRE INSTRUCTOR

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NFPA 1720 – A Working Guide (Part Two)

TASK

The purpose of this month's **Instruct-O-Gram** is to provide volunteer firefighting personnel with an understanding of the use and importance of achieving operational and organizational success using the proper organizational components as laid out in **NFPA 1720, Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, 2001 Edition**. This will be accomplished through the use of lecture and the attached checklist.

INTRODUCTION

The students should have a basic understanding of their role in the fire department, and the role they are to play during all types of suppression and station operations. In order to better participate in their role in the fire department, the students should have a basic understanding of what organizations are and how they fit in to the overall scheme of fire department operations.

CLASS OUTLINE

The instructor will review the outline with the class. The instructor may wish to use examples, or call for examples from the students. The instructor may also wish to encourage brainstorming sessions to create an enthusiasm among the students.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Review of the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1021, Standard for Professional Fire Officers Qualifications makes the following reference to organizations. "...The organizational structure of the department; departmental operating procedures for administration, emergency operations, and safety; departmental budget process; information management and record keeping; the fire prevention and building safety codes and ordinances applicable to the jurisdiction; incident management system; socioeconomic and political factors that impact the fire service; cultural diversity; methods used by supervisors to obtain cooperation within a group of subordinates; the rights of management and members; agreements in force between the organization and members;

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policies and procedures regarding the operation of the department as they involve supervisors and members.”

This quotation tells us that the members of that technical committee are looking for fire officers who know how a fire department should be organized.

NFPA 1720 serves as a template for creating an effective and efficient volunteer fire department. The provisions of this standard may also be applied to call and combination fire departments.

This is the second of two **Instruct-O-Grams** that will present a checklist to help you understand the elements of an effective organization. We urge you to keep both this and the previous edition of this document together in your files.

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Intercommunity Organization

- ◆ Are your mutual aid, automatic aid, and fire protection agreements in writing?
- ◆ Do they address such issues as liability for injuries and deaths, disability retirements, cost of service, authorization to respond, staffing, and equipment, including the resources to be made available and the designation of the Incident Commander?
- ◆ Do your procedures require the training of personnel for all fire departments in those procedures that govern your mutual aid, automatic aid, and fire protection agreement?
- ◆ Are these plans comprehensive and do they produce an effective fire force and ensure uniform operations?
- ◆ Are those companies who respond to mutual aid incidents equipped with communications equipment that allow personnel to communicate with the Incident Commander and division officers, group officers, or sector officers?

2. Emergency Medical Services

- ◆ Are your emergency medical services (EMS) operations organized in such a way as to ensure that fire department's emergency medical capability includes:

- Personnel
- Equipment
- Resources to deploy the initial arriving company and additional alarm assignments?

- ◆ Do your procedures include established automatic mutual aid or mutual aid agreements?

The fire department shall clearly document its role, responsibilities, functions, and objectives for the delivery of EMS.

Note: Established System Components.

These basic treatment levels within an EMS system have been established, for the purposes of this standard, to categorize the various levels of EMS response as first responder, basic life support (BLS), and advanced life support (ALS). The specific patient treatment capabilities associated with each level shall be determined by the Authority Having Jurisdiction for the approval and licensing of EMS providers within each state and province.

- ◆ Are you meeting your response requirements in a timely fashion?
- ◆ Do you have a number of no response situations? If you do, indicate how many?

3. Quality Management

- ◆ Does your fire department have a quality management program?

- ◆ Are you reviewing all first responder and BLS medical care provided by the fire department? If you are, are you documenting this review process?

4. Special Operations Response

- ◆ Have you established any special operations components within your fire department?
- ◆ Have you organized your special operations in such a manner as to ensure that the fire department's special operations capability includes:
 - Sufficient personnel
 - Operational procedures
 - Equipment and apparatus
 - Resources to efficiently, effectively, and safely deploy the initial arriving company and additional alarm assignments providing such services?
- ◆ Have you established automatic mutual aid or mutual aid agreements to assist you in complying with your operational requirements?
- ◆ Have you adopted a special operations response plan and standard operating procedures that specify the role and responsibilities of the fire department and the authorized functions of members responding to hazardous materials emergency incidents?
- ◆ Have all fire department members who are expected to respond to emergency incidents beyond the first responder operations level for hazardous materials response been trained to the applicable requirements of ,” NFPA 472, Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents?
- ◆ Does your fire department have the capacity to implement a Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) during all special operations incidents that would subject fire fighters to immediate danger of injury, or in the event of equipment failure or other sudden events?

- ◆ Have you determined where you will obtain assistance if a higher level of emergency response is needed beyond the capability of the fire department for special operations?

- ◆ Do your procedures consider the availability of outside resources that deploy these capabilities and the procedures for initiating their response?
- ◆ Do your procedures limit the operations of your personnel to performing only those specific special operations functions for which they have been trained and properly equipped?

5. Fire Department Systems

A. Safety and Health System

- ◆ Does your fire department have a firefighter occupational safety and health program that forms the basic structure for protecting the health and safety of firefighters, regardless of the scale of the department or the emergency?

B. Incident Management System

- ◆ Does your fire department have an incident management system that meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations?
- ◆ Does this system comply with, NFPA 1561, Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System, to form the basic structure of all emergency operations of the fire department, regardless of the scale of the department or the emergency?
- ◆ Do you utilize this incident management system to manage incidents of different types, including structure fires, wildland fires, hazardous materials incidents, emergency medical opera-

tions, and other types of emergencies that could be handled by the department?

C. Training System

- ◆ Does your fire department have a training program and policy that ensures that personnel are trained and competency is maintained to effectively, efficiently, and safely execute all responsibilities consistent with the department's organization and deployment?

D. Communications Systems

- ◆ Does your fire department have a reliable communications system to facilitate prompt delivery of public fire suppression, emergency medical services, and special operations?
- ◆ Does the communications system, including its facilities, equipment, staffing, and operating procedures, comply with, NFPA 1221, Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems?
- ◆ Does your fire department have operating procedures for radio communications that provide for the use of standard protocols and terminology at all types of incidents?
- ◆ Does your fire department have a system of standard terminology to transmit information,

including strategic modes of operation, situation reports, and emergency notifications of imminent hazards?

E. Pre-Incident Planning

- ◆ Does your fire department have operational procedures, policies, and requirements which allow it to conduct pre-incident planning?
- ◆ Does your fire department pay particular attention target hazard occupancies?

SUMMARY

In this month's issue of the **Instruct-O-Gram**, we have laid out the second half of a checklist that you can use to assess your fire department's level of congruence with the new **NFPA Standard 1720**. We urge you to continually assess the way in which your fire department is organized. You do not want to run afoul of the recognized standard for organizing and operating a volunteer, call, or combination fire department.

This Instruct-O-Gram was created by Dr. Harry R. Carter, MIFireE, a municipal fire protection consultant from Adelphia, New Jersey. Dr. Carter is a former President of **ISFSI**.

STUDENT REFERENCE

NFPA 1720 - Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, 2001 Edition

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